



Department
for Education

Improving adult basic skills: equality impact assessment

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Introduction

This document assesses the impact of new national standards for basic digital skills and the introduction of a national entitlement to digital skills on people with protected characteristics.

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Secretary of State, when exercising the functions of the Secretary of State, to have due regard to the need:

- to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following as protected characteristics for the public sector equality duty:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including ethnicity)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.¹

19-24 year olds with special educational needs (SEN) is not a group covered specifically by the Equality Act 2010 (although people within this group may otherwise share a protected characteristic), but have been included in this analysis wherever possible. This is because this group can be over-represented among low-attaining students and we are keen to ensure the difficulties they face are not unnecessarily compounded by the reforms.

¹ [Equality Act 2010, section 4](#)

Engagement and involvement

The public consultation opened on 18 October 2018 and closed on 10 January 2019. We received 170 responses from a range of stakeholders including individuals, education institutions, industry, digital inclusion charities and organisations, awarding organisations, local authorities and representative bodies. As part of this, we also received responses from organisations representing people with disabilities.

In developing proposals for the introduction of the new entitlement and new national standards, we worked alongside Ofqual, employers, digital inclusion organisations, providers and subject experts. Subject experts included digital and basic skills leads from a range of post-19 providers, awarding organisations, Alpha Plus, Department for Education (DfE) officials and other organisations.

Prior to formal consultation, DfE officials ran three workshops attended by over fifty representatives from providers, awarding organisations and digital inclusion organisations to gain feedback on early proposals.

After the closure of the consultation, we made further revisions to the standards.

Description of the policy

Digital skills are as important to employability and participation in society as English and maths, yet an estimated one in five adults lack basic digital skills².

To address this, from 2020, alongside the existing legal entitlements to English and maths, we will introduce an entitlement to fully funded digital qualifications. Adults with no or low digital skills will have the opportunity to undertake improved digital qualifications based on new national standards setting out the digital skills people need to get on in life and work.

The new entitlement will be funded through the adult education budget. In devolved areas, the specified mayoral combined authorities and the Mayor of London will need to make provision for the funding of the digital entitlement as part of their devolution deal alongside the English and maths, level 2 and level 3 statutory entitlements. For non-devolved areas the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will provide the adult education budget funding.

The statutory duty to ensure specified digital skills qualifications are made available by providers and are offered free of charge to adults with no or low digital skills has been set out in primary legislation for England (Digital Economy Act 2017³), mirroring that of the English and maths legal entitlements.

Alongside wider action on digital skills, the entitlement will help providers support adults at risk of being left behind by an increasingly digital world.

As part of the reform process, we have worked with providers, employers, subject experts and other stakeholders to prepare the new national standards published alongside the consultation response. The Department has also worked closely with Ofqual and taken into account the views of awarding organisations to ensure the new national standards can form the basis of improved qualifications.

² [Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index, 2018](#)

³ [Digital Economy Act, 2017](#)

Evidence base

Our analysis of the potential impact of our proposals to improve adult basic digital skills has been informed by:

- meetings with providers, awarding organisations, digital inclusion charities and employers;
- a review of relevant literature, as referenced throughout the equality impact assessment; and
- responses to our consultation on proposals to improve adult basic digital skills, which sought views on whether the proposals had the potential to have a disproportionately positive or negative impact on specific groups, in particular the 'protected characteristic' groups.

Evidence review

Nearly half of the 170 respondents to the public consultation stated they did not know whether the proposals would have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics. Of the respondents that did provide a view, the majority stated the proposals would not have a disproportionately positive or negative impact.

34 respondents concluded that the proposals would have a disproportionately positive impact due to people in protected characteristic groups comprising the majority of digitally excluded adults in England. This is reflected in the most recent basic skills survey undertaken by Ipsos Mori for Lloyds Banking Group⁴ which found:

- 61% of adults with no basic digital skills are female.
- 76% of those with no basic digital skills are retired.

It is also reflected by internet use by disabled people. Estimates on internet use in the UK⁵ estimate that adults who self-assess they have a disability are four times more likely to be off line than those who do not.

45 respondents concluded that the proposals would have a disproportionately negative impact. Of the nine groups protected under the Equality Act 2010, most respondents provided feedback on adults with a disability and a few respondents referenced older adults. No respondents referenced specific disabilities that the reforms may have a particular impact on.

No explicit feedback was provided on the other seven groups with protected characteristics - gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The key issues raised with regard to individuals with a disability were that:

- some of the skills statements in the draft standards may disadvantage some individuals;
- assistive technologies such as text to speech and voice recognition are not explicitly covered in the standards; and
- a single entry level might negatively affect progression of individuals.

These issues are considered in the sections that follow, alongside other issues which we have identified through our own consideration of equality. In all cases our consideration

⁴ [Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index, 2018](#)

⁵ [ONS Internet users, UK: 2018](#)

of the issues has been informed by our previous work with stakeholders in developing the new standards and the relevant literature.

We also received significant feedback on learner support, reasonable adjustments and allowing young people with SEN to take the new qualifications. These issues are also covered in the sections that follow. However, as they go beyond the specific reforms being consulted on, we have excluded them from this impact assessment.

The new national standards

Two thirds of 170 respondents to the consultation agreed the draft standards captured the essential digital skills needed for life, work and further study, while one in five did not.

Impact

Relatively few comments were received concerning the proposed standards with respect to equality. Three respondents to the consultation proposed that assistive technologies should be explicitly referenced in the skills standards.

Three respondents expressed a concern that the terminology of an entry level course assessed at entry level 3 would be too difficult for individuals accessing courses in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) to understand with pre-entry English and maths.

Conclusion

Skills statements have been expressed in terms designed to avoid creating unnecessary barriers to individuals with a learning difficulty or a disability and to support use of assistive technology.

We have concluded that the standards published alongside the consultation did not sufficiently reference accessibility. We have added new skills statements to the 'using devices and handling information' skills area that refer to using system settings to adjust devices to individual needs, including those for accessibility. The accompanying amplification refers to accessibility settings available on most operating systems including use of a magnifier, screen readers and voice controls.

As set out in the funding and performance management rules for the adult education budget, where a provider identifies that an individual has LDD or a financial barrier, their adult education budget allocation enables them to claim learning support and/or learner support funding to meet their additional needs. As set out in the Equality Act 2010, learning support is available to meet the cost of putting in place a reasonable adjustment for individuals who have an identified LDD to achieve their learning goal.

The draft standards use plain English whenever possible and technical language only when required to define and differentiate skills at each level. Care has also been taken to ensure coherence and consistency with literacy and numeracy skills. Where literacy and/or numeracy skills are required to achieve a digital skill, these are set at least at the level below that of the digital skill. This will ensure the focus remains on the individual's development of the digital skill, rather than testing their literacy and/or numeracy ability.

Entry level qualifications in essential digital skills

The new national standards feature a single entry level, rather than three sub-entry levels (entry level 1, entry level 2 and entry level 3).

The proposal for a single entry level was originally made by representatives from awarding organisations and providers who attended pre-consultation workshops to discuss early drafts of the standards. The significant majority of attendees agreed that the sub-entry skills statements provided insufficient progression and broke up knowledge and skills in an artificial and fragmented manner. Attendees proposed that a single entry level would better support skills development.

Impact

The majority of respondents supported the proposal for a single entry level, agreeing it was not possible to define coherent standards at each of the three entry sub-levels. This is in contrast to English and maths, where skills and knowledge are more readily defined through the three entry sub-levels.

Eight respondents to the consultation felt that individuals with LDD might be disadvantaged by a single entry level. One respondent suggested that a single entry level might result in providers not enrolling individuals with the longest distance to travel from entry level 3.

To assess the impact on individuals with LDD, we have analysed enrolments across the three entry levels and reviewed the content of existing entry level qualifications.

As shown in Table 1, 58% of individuals enrolling on adult education budget funded entry level qualifications in 17/18 were at entry level 3, with limited use of entry level 1 and entry level 2 qualifications. The proportion of enrolments by individuals with LDD is higher for entry level 3 than for entry level 2 or entry level 1. This suggests lower entry qualifications are not playing a significant role in supporting individuals with LDD to progress to a greater extent than other individuals.

A sample of existing entry level qualifications were reviewed to check for progression across the three entry sub-levels. This found that current qualifications provide insufficient progression, with learning outcomes being similar or, in some cases, the same across the three entry levels. We also noted that the purpose statements for most entry level 3 qualifications describe them as suitable for adults with no or low digital skills, and state that no prior knowledge is required.

Table 1: Proportion of adult (19+) learners funded via the adult education budget (AEB) on Entry level ICT qualifications¹ by Entry Sub Level: England, 2017/18

	Number	Percentage	LDD²	BAME³	Female	50+
Entry level 3	15,800	58%	61%	52%	55%	58%
Entry level 2	4,300	16%	13%	21%	17%	13%
Entry level 1	3,200	12%	8%	18%	13%	12%
Multiple entry level ⁴	2,500	9%	13%	6%	10%	11%
Other entry level	1,400	5%	5%	2%	5%	7%
Entry level total	27,300	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Notes:

1. 'ICT' in the above table refers to learners taking qualifications within the Sector Subject Area (SSA) '6.2 - ICT for users' and also ICT Functional Skills qualifications within SSA '14.1 - Foundations for learning and life'.
2. LLD = Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities
3. BAME = Black, Asian, Mixed or Other ethnic group
4. Multiple entry level is when more than one Entry sub-level is noted in the [Learning Aims Reference database](#).

Conclusion

We have concluded that a single entry level is in the best interest of all individuals.

Analysis of enrolment data confirms that most individuals, including those with LDD, start their digital learning at entry level 3, so the replacement of sub-entry level qualifications with entry level qualifications assessed at entry level 3 will not introduce barriers for most individuals.

For individuals, including those with LDD, assessed as not ready to study the new entry level qualifications, we will continue to ensure ESFA funded provision is available. The specified mayoral combined authorities and the Mayor of London will determine what provision they will fund outside of the legal entitlements.

Skill levels covered by the new digital entitlement

This issue was not raised by respondents to the consultation, but was identified through our own consideration of equality.

The consultation proposed that publicly funded qualifications should be offered up to, and including level 1 as part of the new entitlement. This was widely supported by respondents to the consultation, with 90% in agreement.

The new digital offer will comprise functional skills qualifications (FSQs) and new essential digital skills qualifications. The list of approved qualifications will be published in January 2020 alongside the list of qualifications for the English and maths entitlements.

Where awarding organisations offer level 2 digital qualifications focused on the acquisition of basic digital skills (rather than practitioner skills or computer science), we will encourage them to map these qualifications against the new level 1 standards and consider whether they should continue to be offered and awarded.

Impact

Data shows that there is a greater proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications⁶ who consider that they have a learning difficulty, disability or health problem than other adult education budget funded provision. The difference decreases from entry level to level 1, and from level 1 to level 2. At entry level, the proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications who have a learning difficulty or disability (LDD) is 12ppts higher than other adult education budget funded provision at that level.

The proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications who identify as black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) is lower or almost the same as the proportion of adults aged 19+ on other Adult education budget qualifications who are BAME, from entry level up to level 2. The difference is largest at entry level (compared to level 1 and level 2), where the proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications who are BAME is 14ppts lower than other adult education budget funded provision at that level.

The proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications who are female varies across levels. At entry level, the proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications who are female is 7ppts lower than other adult education budget funded provision at that level, but at level 1, the proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital

⁶ Defined as individuals taking qualifications funded by the Adult education budget within Sector Subject Area (SSA) '6.2 ICT for users' and also ICT Functional Skills qualifications within SSA '14.1, foundations for learning and life'.

qualifications who are female is 9ppts higher than other adult education budget funded provision at that level.

There is a greater proportion of adults on basic digital qualifications who are aged 50+, than other adult education budget funded provision. The difference is largest for provision at entry level, where 42% of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications are aged 50+, compared to 20% of adults taking other adult education budget funded provision at that level.

Conclusion

The analysis shows that there is a greater proportion of adults on basic digital qualifications who have LDD, or are aged 50+, compared to other adult education budget funded provision. This is particularly pronounced at entry level and Level 1, so these groups could benefit from the new entitlement offering fully funded digital qualifications up to level 1.

Level 2 digital skills qualifications will remain eligible for funding where they meet criteria for inclusion in the level 2 entitlement or in the broader adult education budget 'local flexibility' offer, so the impact on individuals at this skills level is neutral.

Impact on enrolments in other subjects

This issue was not raised by respondents to the consultation, but was identified through our own consideration of equality.

The new entitlement will be funded through the national adult education budget. In devolved areas, the specified mayoral combined authorities and the Mayor of London will need to make provision for the funding of the digital entitlement as part of their devolution deal alongside the English, maths, level 2 and level 3 statutory entitlements.

The new entitlement may result in an increase in digital skills enrolments, which would mean less adult education budget funding for other subjects. As providers have autonomy in how they use their adult education budget allocations, it is not possible to predict the extent to which displacement will occur, and which subjects will be impacted

Impact

Data, set out in table 2 in Annex B, shows that for entry level and level 1, a larger proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications have a learning difficulty, disability or health problem than other adult education budget funded provision at those levels. At entry level, the proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications who identify as black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) is 14ppts lower than other adult education budget funded provision at that level, and at level 1, the proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications who are BAME is 4ppts lower than other adult education budget funded provision at that level.

The data also shows that the proportion of adults aged 19+ taking basic digital qualifications who are female varies. At entry level, the proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications who are female is 7ppts lower than other adult education budget funded provision at that level, but the proportion of adults aged 19+ taking basic digital qualifications at level 1 who are female is 9ppts higher than other adult education budget funded provision at that level.

A significantly larger proportion of adults on basic digital qualifications are aged 50+, than other Adult education budget funded provision across all levels from entry level up to level 2. The largest difference is observed at entry level, where the proportion of adults on basic digital qualifications who are aged 50+ is 22ppts higher than other adult education budget funded provision at that level.

Conclusion

It is not possible to accurately model the overall impact on individuals with protected characteristics due to the impact being dependent on decisions made by devolved areas and individual providers.

However, the analysis suggests that on balance, it is more likely that individuals who have a learning difficulty, disability or health problem and those aged over 50 will benefit from the introduction of the entitlement, and there may be a slight negative impact on BAME and female individuals. Taking the protected groups in turn:

- At entry level and level 1, a larger proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications have LDD than other adult education budget funded provision at those levels. Therefore, if devolved areas and providers redirected funding from other subjects to digital, this could stand to benefit adults with LDD. However, this depends on the specific qualifications from which funding would be displaced.
- At entry level and level 1, a lower proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications are BAME than in other adult education budget funded qualifications at those levels. If funding is reduced in other areas of the adult education budget, it could negatively impact BAME individuals. The proportion of adults aged 19+ on other adult education budget funded qualifications who are BAME is relatively higher at entry level than level 1 and level 2 (50%, compared to 29% and 22% respectively). Therefore, there could be a negative impact on BAME individuals if funding is redirected from other adult education budget funded entry level qualifications than qualifications at other levels. However, this depends on the qualifications from which funds are redirected, as it is likely there is variation between individual qualifications.
- The difference between the proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications who are female and the proportion of adults aged 19+ on other adult education budget funded qualifications who are female varies across levels. At entry level, a smaller proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications are female compared to other adult education budget funded provision at that level, whereas at level 1, a larger proportion of adults aged 19+ on basic digital qualifications are female, compared to other adult education budget funded provision at that level. The scale and nature of the impact that this change will have on female adults will depend on which levels and qualifications funding is redirected from.
- At entry level and level 1, a larger proportion of adults on basic digital qualifications are aged 50+, than in other adult education budget funded provision at those levels. Therefore, if providers redirected funding from other subjects to digital, the impact on individuals aged 50+ could be positive. However, this depends on the specific qualifications from which funding would be displaced from.

Learner support and reasonable adjustments

Seventeen respondents expressed concern that funding may not be available to provide additional support to individuals with LDD to ensure accessibility and inclusivity.

Respondents made the case for effective and appropriate additional support, tailored to the needs of each individual. Respondents cited individuals with LDD that may require assistive technologies to access learning, and individual with literacy needs, or with English as a second or additional language, who may need additional support and resources.

As set out in the funding and performance management rules for the adult education budget, where a provider identifies that an individual has LDD, or a financial barrier, their adult education budget allocation enables them to claim learning support and/or learner support funding to meet their additional needs. As set out in the Equality Act 2010, learning support is available to meet the cost of putting in place a reasonable adjustment for individuals who have an identified learning difficulty or disability to achieve their learning goal.

Learning support can cover a range of needs, including an assessment for dyslexia, funding to pay for specialist equipment or helpers, and arranging signers or note takers. Learning support is also available to providers delivering apprenticeships or training funded by the adult education budget.

Under the current funding rules there are three elements to this funding:

- **Fixed monthly rate** - providers claim a fixed monthly rate for each individual to fund support such as equipment, an interpreter or support worker.
- **Excess** - if support needs exceed the fixed monthly rate providers can claim excess costs.
- **Exceptional learning support** - if support costs exceed £19,000, providers can apply for 'exceptional learning support' with appropriate supporting evidence.

Some individuals with profound LDD may have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which includes high needs funding for individuals up to 25 years of age. This is funded outside of the adult education budget.

For 16-19 year olds, providers can access 'disadvantage funding' in order to make reasonable adjustments for individuals. This funding is allocated by formula within a provider's basic funding programme and is there to help meet the additional needs of individuals, including those with a disability or SEN.

Some respondents suggested that assessments should allow use of assistive technology, particularly with respect to practical tasks, and flagged that individuals with a

disability may have difficulty in providing evidence for some of the skills statements, such as buying online.

This feedback has been provided to Ofqual who are responsible for assessment arrangements for all regulated qualifications. When designing qualifications, awarding organisations are required to put reasonable adjustments in place to meet the needs of any disabled individuals, or those with SEN, that require them, as stipulated by the Equality Act 2010.⁷

Ofqual has stipulated that awarding organisations must have in place clear arrangements for reasonable adjustments in relation to their qualifications, and to publish those arrangements, including how individuals qualify for them, and what reasonable adjustment will be made.⁸

⁷ [Equality Act 2010, section 91](#)

⁸ [Ofqual specifications in relation to the reasonable adjustment of general qualifications](#)

Making essential digital skills qualifications available to young people with SEN

Three respondents made the case for making the new essential digital skills qualifications available for young people with SEN.

There is already a range of digital qualifications focused on basic digital or IT user skills approved for teaching at key stage 4.

We expect new essential digital skills qualifications to be primarily studied by adults aged 19 and over, and it is important that the design and content of the qualifications prioritise the needs of adults. The new entitlement will fully fund adults with no or low digital skills, and we expect it to drive the majority of take-up for these new qualifications.

In some circumstances the qualifications may also meet the needs of 16 to 18 year olds undertaking training at level 2 or below, such as a preparatory programme ahead of a T Level programme or an apprenticeship.

Conclusion

DfE considers that the new essential digital skills qualifications should be accessible and appeal to all adults regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, faith, disability, sexual orientation or maternity.

Equality considerations have been taken into account before, during and after the process of developing the new standards and determining arrangements for the new entitlement.

In examining the evidence and opinions we have collated, we consider the final changes proposed are objectively justified because they will have the effect of improving standards and opportunities. Where concerns have been identified that potentially may have a negative impact, we have responded as set out above. Further means of mitigation are already embedded in legislation or guidance, such as the reasonable adjustments and additional learner support.

The proposals will have a disproportionately positive impact due to people in protected characteristic groups comprising the majority of digitally excluded adults in England. Therefore we assess that overall the proposals for improving adult basic digital skills examined in this equality impact assessment will have a positive impact on equality of opportunity by increasing access to, and providing relevant, qualifications in which individuals, employers and education providers can have full confidence.

Consultation and engagement with expert groups, along with a review of the available research, indicates that the risk of disproportionate impact on the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation is low.

These reforms will help ensure adults benefit from improved qualifications that reflect the digital, connected world we live in. We are confident that where this presents challenges to individuals with protected characteristics or learning difficulties, there are a number of appropriate and available means of mitigation. These include the provision of good quality teaching and support for individuals with LDD or for whom English is not their first language.

Annex A: References

BIS (Department of Business, Innovation and Skills) (2012), The 2011 Skills for Life survey: a survey of literacy, numeracy and ICT levels in England. Research paper number 81. London: Department of Business, Innovation and Skills.

Lloyds Bank (2018) UK Consumer Digital Index 2018.

ONS (2018) Internet users, UK: 2018.

CBI/Pearson (2018), Education and Skills Survey. London: CBI.

OECD (2016), Building Skills for All: A Review of England. London: OECD.

Annex B: Data used in this equality impact assessment

Table 1: Proportion of adult (19+) learners funded via the adult education budget (AEB) on Entry level ICT qualifications¹ by Entry Sub Level: England, 2017/18

	Number	Percentage	LDD ²	BAME ³	Female	50+
Entry level 3	15,800	58%	61%	52%	55%	58%
Entry level 2	4,300	16%	13%	21%	17%	13%
Entry level 1	3,200	12%	8%	18%	13%	12%
Multiple entry level ⁴	2,500	9%	13%	6%	10%	11%
Other entry level	1,400	5%	5%	2%	5%	7%
Entry level total	27,300	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2: Characteristics of adult (19+) learners funded via the adult education budget (AEB) on specific ICT qualifications and other AEB learners up to level 2: England, 2017/18

		Number	LDD ²	BAME ³	Female	50+
Level 2	ICT ¹	15,900	24%	22%	61%	29%
	Other AEB	435,600	15%	22%	65%	17%
	Difference (ppt)		8	0	-3	12
Level 1	ICT ¹	21,200	30%	25%	57%	37%
	Other AEB	191,500	21%	29%	47%	20%
	Difference (ppt)		10	-4	9	17
Entry level	ICT ¹	27,300	30%	36%	54%	43%
	Other AEB	191,300	18%	50%	60%	20%
	Difference (ppt)		12	-14	-7	22
<i>Entry level 3</i>	<i>ICT¹</i>	<i>15,800</i>	<i>31%</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>51%</i>	<i>42%</i>
	<i>Other AEB</i>	<i>65,100</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>40%</i>	<i>54%</i>	<i>19%</i>
	<i>Difference (ppt)</i>		<i>11</i>	<i>-7</i>	<i>-4</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Entry level 2</i>	<i>ICT¹</i>	<i>4,300</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>48%</i>	<i>57%</i>	<i>34%</i>
	<i>Other AEB</i>	<i>33,100</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>63%</i>	<i>15%</i>
	<i>Difference (ppt)</i>		<i>13</i>	<i>-7</i>	<i>-6</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Entry level 1</i>	<i>ICT¹</i>	<i>3,200</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>56%</i>	<i>61%</i>	<i>42%</i>
	<i>Other AEB</i>	<i>28,100</i>	<i>11%</i>	<i>62%</i>	<i>62%</i>	<i>17%</i>
	<i>Difference (ppt)</i>		<i>8</i>	<i>-6</i>	<i>-1</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Multiple entry Level⁴</i>	<i>ICT¹</i>	<i>2,500</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>56%</i>	<i>52%</i>
	<i>Other AEB</i>	<i>43,600</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>56%</i>	<i>65%</i>	<i>23%</i>
	<i>Difference (ppt)</i>		<i>19</i>	<i>-31</i>	<i>-9</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Other entry level</i>	<i>ICT¹</i>	<i>1,400</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>56%</i>	<i>56%</i>
	<i>Other AEB</i>	<i>21,500</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>63%</i>	<i>30%</i>
	<i>Difference (ppt)</i>		<i>11</i>	<i>-36</i>	<i>-7</i>	<i>27</i>
Entry to level 2	ICT¹	64,400	29%	29%	57%	37%
	Other AEB	818,500	17%	30%	60%	18%
	Difference (ppt)		11	-1	-3	19

Notes:

AEB in this analysis includes those on traineeships but not community learning.

1. 'ICT' in the above tables refers to learners taking qualifications within the Sector Subject Area (SSA) '6.2 - ICT for users' and also ICT Functional Skills qualifications within SSA '14.1 - Foundations for learning and life'.
2. LDD = Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities
3. BAME = Black, Asian, Mixed or other ethnic group
4. Multiple entry level is when more than one entry sub-level is noted in the [Learning Aims Reference database](#).

Methodology:

Note that the percentage point differences are calculated on the unrounded data.

These tables are based on analysis of the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). Learners have been assigned to a group via the following hierarchy:

- If the AEB learner is taking one of the ICT qualifications noted in the table footnotes, show their highest level of learning.
- For the entry level splits, the analysis first looks at the entry sub-level variable in the [Learning Aims Reference database](#). If this is missing then the level is assigned using the name of the qualification.
- If both the entry sub-level and the name of the qualification do not show the sub-level, the learner is placed in 'Other entry level'.
- Then the same method applies for AEB learners who are not studying one of the ICT qualifications noted above.

Therefore if a learner is studying a level 2 AEB qualification which is not in the relevant ICT area along with a level 1 ICT qualification in the relevant area via AEB funding they will be assigned to the level 1 ICT category as this comes first in the hierarchy.



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